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REPORT ON RURAL ECONOMIC SURVEY IN UNITED KHASI-JAINTIA HILLS.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

1.1 Objective.—Consequent upon restrictions on trade emerging in the border markets after partition, the economic condition of the people living in the border areas of the United Khasi-Jaintia Hills district adjoining East Pakistan, suffered a serious set back. There was demand from the people all over the border areas for adequate relief as well as rehabilitation of their shattered economy. From time to time Government took up various relief measures but, for adopting a planned programme of relief and rehabilitation in an integrated and sustained manner, the need for a comprehensive economic survey of the district with special emphasis on the border areas, came to the forefront. Accordingly at the instance of Government of Assam, the Department of Economics and Statistics addressed itself to the task of launching an economic survey in the district.

The programme consisted of an intensive study of the conditions in selected villages and was designed to meet the following objectives:— (I) To obtain a broad picture of the rural economic conditions in the district and in particular, to provide factual data on the various aspects of agriculture and farm economics, *e. g.*, land tenure, size and distribution of agricultural holdings and farms, fragmentation, income and expenditures occupation and the like. Data should be collected also on the occupations and industries which play subsidiary roles in the economy of the district. (II) Special emphasis need be given on border areas, in order to bring to light the measure of suffering of the border people as a result of partition and to suggest various long and short term measures for ameliorating the condition of the border people. (III) The survey should adequately cover the Community Development areas also in order that it becomes possible to make an assessment of the impact of the community development programmes on the socio-economic life of the people in these areas.

1.2 Coverage and Period.—The field work of the survey was started on 28th February, 1958 and was completed by the middle of July, 1958 thus requiring nearly four and a half months.

1.3 Design of the Survey.—For a study of border economy a purposive selection of ten villages in the border area, which were known to be important from the point of view of production and distributive trade in pre-partition days was made. Similarly for project areas a total of eight villages two from each of the four blocks in the district—where intensive development programmes were taken up, were selected. These villages were selected by the Project Officers themselves. Apart from these, a random sample of ten villages from all over the district were taken. Thus a total of 28 villages all over district—10 from border areas, 8 from project areas and 10 from general areas were selected for